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Sequel to 'J.F.K.' May Be Under Way

BEFORE WARNER Brothers had a first look at the box office reports on Oliver Stone's "J.F.K," the film director had secretly gone to work on a mighty sequel to it. Working title for the new scenario was "A.L."

That title, for security reasons, was only whispered among his co-workers and never put on paper. The other night, however, in a sudden burst of energy that often flows from conspiratorial zeal, Stone revealed to a bartender at the old Beverly Hills Hotel that "A.L." was only an abbreviation. The correct working title was in fact Project Abraham Lincoln.

"Some studio executives were shocked," Stone said, "when 'J.F.K.' ran to 3 hours and 20 minutes on the screen. I have news for Warners. My next one will be double that."

That wasn't necessarily an exaggeration. Stone feels deeply, if often selectively, about American presidents. If he is only twice as emotional about Lincoln as he was about Kennedy, "A.L." will run to 6 hours, 40 minutes.

Director Stone can easily reach that length without half trying. He has lots of raw material to work on. While Lee Harvey Oswald killed Jack Kennedy single-handedly, in the assassination of Lincoln, John Wilkes Booth had four co-conspirators. They were later hanged.

The killing of Kennedy, as Stone tells it, was not that simple. He raises the possible culpability of our officials, including Lyndon Johnson, national institutions and national attitudes. All, along with Oswald, might have been involved.

At no personal expenditure, almost three-fourths of the respondents in a Time/CNN Poll said they were not being told the truth about the Kennedy assassination. When it comes to buying tickets, however, "J.F.K." is already failing badly. It trails "The Last Boy Scout" and "Father of the Bride."

It looks as if "A.L." may never get on film.